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Aurora community

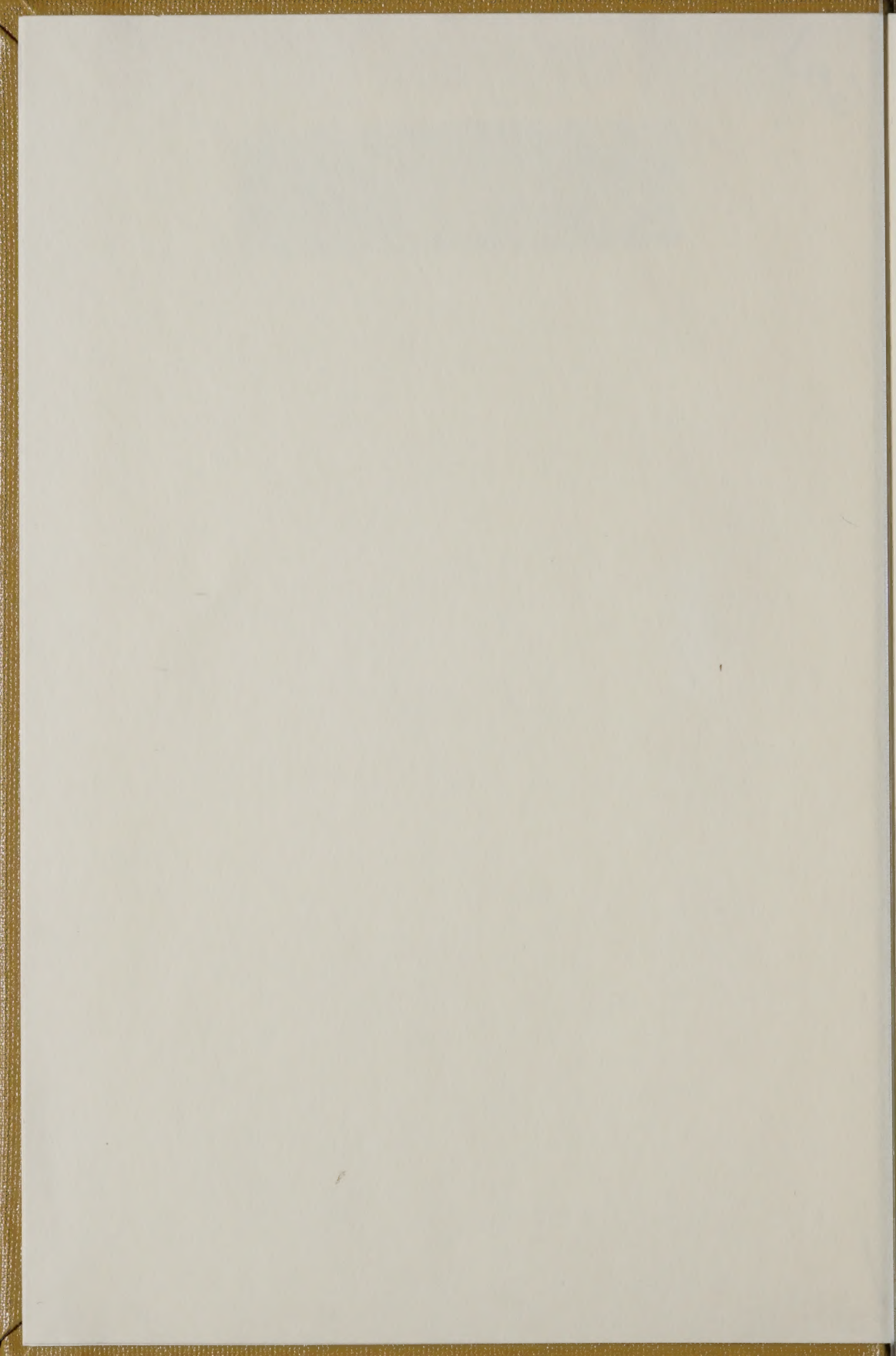
Ye
Old Stone
TAVERN

Ca. 1825

By the author of
"The Old Stone Tavern"

Illustrated by the author

✓





Ye
Old Stone
TAVERN
Circa 1825

On U. S. Rt. 50, One Mile East Of
AURORA, WEST VIRGINIA

(On Ye Olde Great Northwestern Turnpike)

*Entered
National Register
Historic Sites
July 2nd
1973*

AURORA COMMUNITY



Published 1950

by the AURORA COMMUNITY
OF PRESTON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

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DEDICATION

*This publication is affectionately
dedicated to the memory*

of

ELIZABETH HAGUEMYER STOUGH

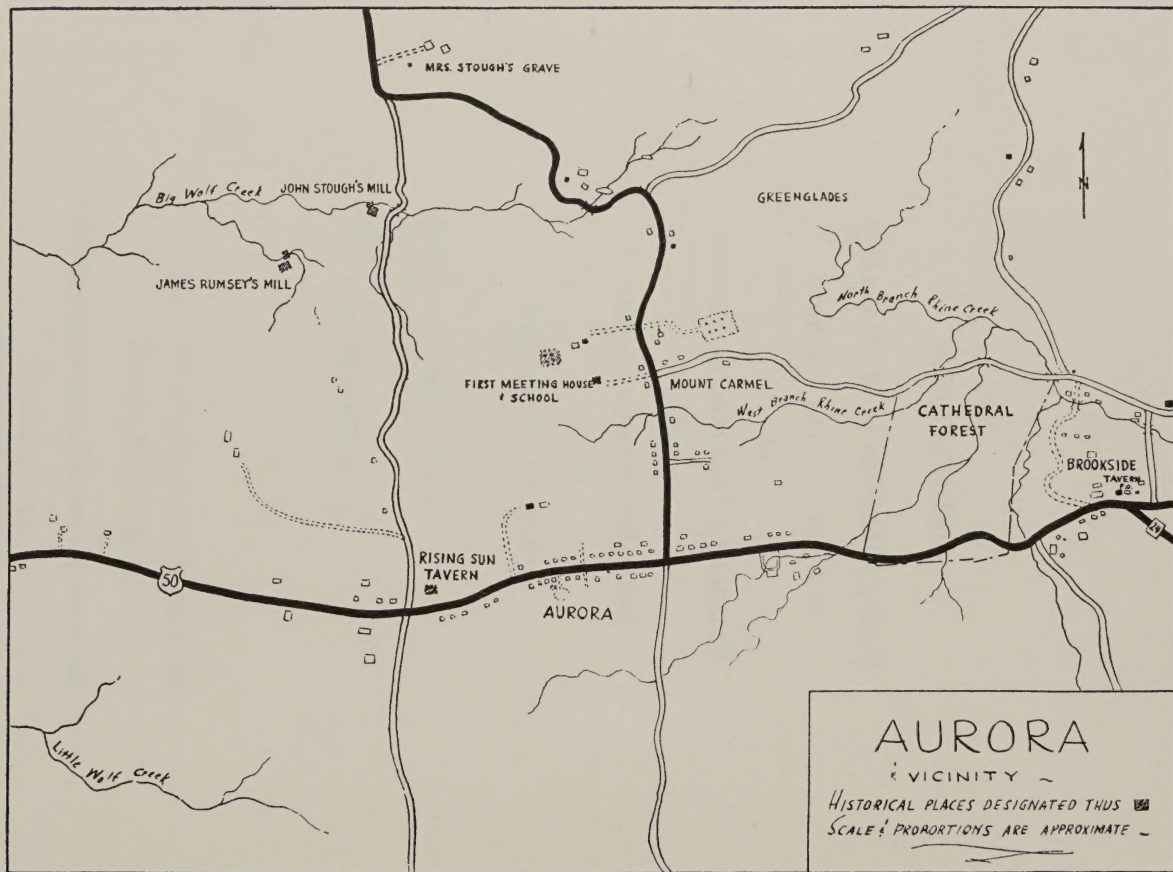
and

the other pioneer mothers

of the

AURORA COMMUNITY

THE AURORA COMMUNITY
OF THE STATE OF IOWA
PUBLISHED BY THE
AURORA COMMUNITY, IOWA



FOREWORD

The author presents the genesis of the Aurora community. Such a production should appeal to every citizen. It was written with a firm belief that the generations following would appreciate a work of this kind.

On the summit of the Alleghenies in Union District, the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, would have found excellent material for his best poem, and the eyes of Benjamin West would have feasted on some most pleasing scenes which on canvas would have elicited the admiration of all lovers of the beautiful.

The name of John Stough is indelibly written in the history of the Lutheran Church in the New World. He was the William Bradford, or the Captain John Smith, or the William Penn of the German settlement now known as the Aurora community.

This community, second to none in the Mountain State, has a proud history. There has gone out from this place persons who by voice and pen have "left their footprints on the sands of time." Aurora has been and is now well represented in the realm of higher education. We would mention the names of Dr. F. V. N. Painter, Dr. Frank Butler Trotter, Professors Howard, Wade, Jay and Forrest Stemple. No rural community of its size has sent more young men and women as teachers in our public schools.

From the beginning down to the present time Aurora was ably represented in the legislative halls of the state by such men as Frederick Harsh, the McCrums, James H. Wilson. Some of the founders of the German settlement, their sons and grandsons were among the first business men of this section of the commonwealth.

The record of this community in the time of peace and in time of war has been excellent. The lot of the people is to be envied. Indeed Preston County is the coldest spot in West Virginia and it is a Mecca for resorters in the summer. The Spanish Cavalier who sought in vain for the fountain of perpetual youth never drank better water than that which flows from the numerous springs in Union District.

Nowhere are more highly flavored apples and more luscious strawberries found. This section grows the best oats in the state and has furnished buckwheat flour for members of the royalty in continental Europe.

The Northwestern Turnpike which passes through Aurora is one of the great roads in the United States. The scenery along this road from Winchester to Parkersburg surpasses that along the National Road. Aurora, the Village Beautiful, is over 2750 feet above sea level.

Young people are constantly going out into the world from this place well fitted in the home, the church, and the school for the battle of life. When leaving they hear: "Think of what they will say of you in Aurora."

If among the boys and girls there are but a few who will appreciate this booklet, the author shall feel well paid for his imperfect work; if many read the same and are moved to do greater things, he will rejoice; and if in some far off places, these lines fall into the hands of those who recognize the name of an ancestor and take a just pride in the founding of the Aurora community, he will be glad.

The writer, one of Father Stough's successors, spent some of his happiest days in and around Aurora, and found great delight in the preparation of this volume.

MARTIN LUTHER PETER

PART I

THE GENESIS
OF THE AURORA COMMUNITY

BY
MARTIN LUTHER PETER
1929

REV. MARTIN LUTHER PETER, M.A., D.D., was born in Corydon, Indiana, January 28, 1865 and died at his home in Dayton, Ohio, May 15, 1943. He was pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Aurora from 1918 to 1923.

Rev. Peter was honored by membership in the following:

- Who's Who in the Clergy
- Religious Leaders of America
- The Biographical Encyclopedia of America
- The Compendium of American Genealogy
- The Handbook of American Genealogy
- Contemporary American Poets
- The Encyclopedia of the World
- Doctor of Divinity degree by Roanoke College in 1942

He is author of the following:

- A Miracle among Men
- Conversation on Christian Baptism
- Luther in Poetry
- America's Early Settlers

“No braver dames had Sparta, no nobler matrons, Rome.”



*No clever, brilliant thinker, she,
 With college record and degree;
She has not known the paths of fame,
 The world has never heard her name;
She walks in old, long-trodden ways,
 The valleys of the yesterdays.
Home is her kingdom, love is her dower
 She seeks no other wand of power
To make home sweet, bring heaven near,
 To win a smile and wipe a tear,
And do her duty day by day,
 In her own quiet place and way.
Around her childish hearts are twined,
 As round some reverend saint enshrined.
And following her's the childish feet
 Are led to ideals true and sweet,
And find all purity and good
 In her divinest motherhood.
She keeps her faith unshadowed still
 God rules the world in good and ill;
Men in her creed are brave and true,
 And women pure as pearls of dew,
And life for her is high and grand,
 By work and glad endeavor spanned.
This sad old earth's a brighter place
 All for the sunshine of her face;
Her very smile a blessing throws,
 And hearts are happier where she goes,
A gentle, clear-eyed messenger,
 To whisper love—"Thank God for her!"*

The Man Who Blazed the Way

JOHNN STOUGH (STAUCH), the first Lutheran clergyman west of the Alleghenies and the first in Ohio, one of the organizers of the Ohio Synod and its first president, son of Godfrey Stough and his wife, Charlotte Kessler, was born in York County, Pennsylvania, January 25, 1762. His father was born in the kingdom of Wurtemberg. The mother a refugee princess from Hanover, the daughter of an heir of royalty who was beheaded, fled with members of the family to America in disguise. She and Godfrey Stough were married on Christmas Day, 1754.

In his nineteenth year the son informed the parents that it was his heart's desire to study for the gospel ministry. This was pleasing to father and mother who were able to support the son in his education. He consulted his pastor, the Rev. J. Goering of York, who gave him very little encouragement, but ten years later deeply regretted that he had not advised him to study for this high calling.

But young Stough heard the voice of God who wanted him to do the work of an evangelist. After finishing his school work, he learned the wagon-making trade, after which he went to Hagerstown, Maryland, where he found employment. Here he met Miss Elizabeth, the daughter of a surveyor, Conrad Haguemyer, whom he married in the summer of 1787. They and another couple left for the "wilderness of the west" immediately after the wedding.

The journey was long, tiresome, and dangerous. Before starting, it was understood that they would not travel on the Lord's Day. There was a heavy rain one Saturday. The morning following, the four tried to cross Savage Creek, a tributary of the Potomac, Stough riding the saddle horse, and his comrade the front horse, and the young women, in the wagon. Soon after the horses were in the act of swimming, the comrade fell into the water and was never again seen. In speaking of this years afterwards, Stough said, "Thus I was alone with the women in the wagon to behold the solemn scene, with the judgment of God resting on us, and not yet over the stream. But our lives and the lives of the horses were saved."

The three crossed the stream safely Monday morning. A compass served as a guide and the ax was used in cutting a road over which they could travel. Finally they arrived in this community.

Reinforcements soon came—The Stemples, Wotrings, Rineharts, Harshes, Ridenours and others. These people were expected. They had sent Stough “west” in 1786 to select a location on which to build a town. Here the banner of Christian civilization was unfurled the year before George Washington was first elected president of the United States.

Church and School

A log building serving a double purpose was soon erected by those hardy pioneers a short distance south of Walter C. Spiggle’s present residence and west of Miss Florence Startzman’s home. This was the meeting house and school. The colonists chose John Stough as lay reader. He had charge of the divine services at the meeting house, led in prayer, read the Holy Scriptures, and an exposition of the same from the Book of Sermons which was presented to the colony by the St. John’s Lutheran congregation of Hagerstown. There was no choir, but everyone sang. The schoolmasters in the pioneer days were usually the lay readers, but not so in the German settlement. John Christian Whitehair (Weiszhaar) taught “the young ideas how to shoot.” He was the first schoolmaster within the present limits of Preston County, and credit is given him for teaching the four R’s—reading, ’riting, ’rithmetic and religion. Eternity alone will reveal the influence for good that went forth from this rude building in the woods.

Called of God After the Order of Melchisedec

Jost Heck, the first blacksmith, and a Miss Goff came to the home of Mr. Stough to be married. This is what he said of the youthful couple: “He was tall and straight with a tawny complexion and dark and restless eyes; barefooted and clad to a little below the knee with skins of animals; he carried his gun upon his shoulder, shot pouch and powder horn at his side, and his bride, closely following him was also clad with the habiliments of the forest. He was a manly countenance, and she with a mischievous smile upon her lips asked to be married. We told them we had no license or legal authority to perform a marriage ceremony in Virginia, but we were a law unto ourselves, our conscience bearing witness and our thoughts accusing or else excusing one another. They said as there was no preacher to be had and as we read sermons, we could read the marriage ceremony also. We concluded, after mature deliberation, that we had better solemnize the nuptials. As I had been chosen to read sermons, I prepared to marry them in backwoods style, without any license myself or asking them for any.”

This was the first marriage ceremony in the German settlement. Later other nuptial knots were tied by the lay reader who wrote to Rev. Goering concerning the matter. Following the advice of his former



Foothold in a new homeland.

pastor, he inquired from the civil court of Virginia and was given legal authority to solemnize matrimony.

Without authority from Synod, he followed a call to preach at Morgantown once a month. Soon after this call came to him, he was ministering to the brethren in German Township, Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

One Sunday night after a hard day's work, he fell asleep and dreamed that his wife and he had parted "and were to live together no more on earth." Early next morning he started for "Paradise" (his home). That night he found his wife and children well, but on Wednesday after a sudden illness, Mrs. Stough died. Before falling asleep, she gave kind neighbors counsel and with trembling hands upon the heads of her dear children, pronounced a blessing. Then looking into the face of her loving husband she said, "I die happy."

The heartbroken husband delivered the funeral address. Her mortal remains were tenderly laid to rest in a small burial place under a majestic oak in the woods. This spot is but a few yards away from the front porch steps of Mr. David Teets' residence between Aurora and Amboy.

The Promotion of Stough

In March 1793, soon after the death and burial of Mrs. Stough, the husband took the little children, Charlotte, Mary, Samuel and Susan on horseback to Mrs. Stough's people in Washington County, Maryland. Here the children lived until 1796 when their father married Miss Catherine Trautman of Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

In May 1793, Mr. Stough attended a synodical meeting in Philadelphia where he passed a satisfactory examination and was granted license as a catechist for one year. He then located on the St. Jacob's glebe, Fayette County, Pennsylvania. In June, 1794, he received a candidate license

to preach for one year at a meeting of the synod in Reading. His field was "Salem, Morgantown, Redstone, and farther west." The candidate, besides doing the work of a catechist, administered the Lord's Supper. He was obliged to bring testimonials from the congregations to the synod, and to submit a written sermon. If satisfactory, the license was renewed for one more year. After three years ordination followed.

Thus, in time, John Stough, who was called of God, became a full-fledged preacher. Little did the pioneer fathers think that when their friend and comrade was chosen as a lay reader, he would be known in aftertime as the father of the first Lutheran Synod in America west of the mountains.

While living in Pennsylvania, he shepherded the flock in this place, and at the same time had appointments in Ohio. He resigned in 1806 and moved to Ohio where he organized twelve congregations in one year. He was elected president of the Ohio Synod six times. He died July 25, 1845 and his wife on Christmas Day, 1848. They were buried near Bucyrus, Ohio. To them ten children were born. Descendants of Father Stough can be found from New York City to San Francisco; ministers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, business men and officials in the Mexican and other wars.

Several Successors of Father Stough

Rev. G. Henry Weygandt was one of Stough's converts in Washington County, Pennsylvania. For nearly twenty years he preached in his home church. While pastor here, the ministers of the first Lutheran Conference west of the Alleghenies met in his parsonage near Washington, Pennsylvania, October 17, 1812. The gavel used by the president of the joint Synod of Ohio and other states was from a seasoned oak of the parsonage which he built. "He was a man whose heart and lips were anointed with pentecostal power and whose feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel."

Rev. John George Butler, the founder of the Lutheran Church, Frostburg, Maryland, like all the early pastors, spent much of the time in the saddle. While he had oversight of the flock here, he blazed the way into Tennessee. His grandson, the Rev. J. G. Butler, D.D., chaplain in the Civil War and afterwards chaplain in Congress and then in the U.S. Senate, pastor of the Luther Memorial Church, Washington City, editor of the *Lutheran Evangelist*, and lecturer in Washington University, visited Aurora a number of times in the summer and preached in St. Paul's Church. While here he stopped at the Shaffer House. Rev. John George Butler was born in Philadelphia in 1754 and died in Cumberland, Maryland, in 1816.

Carl Frederick Heyer was the most gifted pastor here. He finished his education at Goettingen University, and his first field of labor was

Meadville, Pennsylvania, where he was offered the chair of German and French in Allegheny College. He preferred to use his talents in the ministry. From Meadville he followed a call to Cumberland, and at this time Aurora belonged to the Cumberland pastorate. Beloved Father Heyer, as he is familiarly called, was a strong leader, the greatest home missionary in his church, laboring in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana, the founder of the Minnesota Synod, and the first American Lutheran to enter the foreign field. At the time of his death, November 7th, 1873, he was chaplain of the Mt. Airy Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. His name also will ever be cherished by the Christians in far off India.

First Settlements in the Now Preston County

The Eckerlein brothers settled as early as 1745 at the mouth of Dunkard Creek, which empties into the Monongahela River. This was the first white settlement in southwestern Pennsylvania—in Greene County between Masontown and New Geneva. The next settlers were Wendel Braun (Brown) and his sons who located near the Eckerleins on the opposite side of the river. This was in 1751. Prior to 1754 Frederick Waltzer was located near the Braun (Brown) settlement. All were Germans. The three Eckerlein brothers were mystics, members of the German Seventh Day Baptist Church, a secession from the Dunkards. The Eckerleins left Greene County and settled on a tract of land now well known as Dunkard Bottom near Kingwood. When ammunition was well nigh exhausted and with but a small supply of salt on hand Dr. Thomas Eckerlein started for a settlement on the Great War Path. This



Reminders of a pioneering generation.

led him to a place on the Shenandoah River (Winchester) where he exchanged furs for necessary supplies. While resting at Fort Pleasant on the south branch of the Potomac en route homeward he was arrested on suspicion after telling some of the men at the fort about his home at Dunkard Bottom. He declared that he was innocent and was finally released upon the condition that he return to his wilderness home under guard and if his statement be found false he would be treated as a renegade. When he and the guard arrived they beheld a heart-rendering sight: the mutilated bodies of the two brothers, and the ash heap where once stood the cabin home, and the garden and little fields laid in waste. Near this spot, the first white settlement in Preston County, the remains were placed in the confines of the grave and soon after the funeral services the heartbroken brother returned with the guard to Fort Pleasant. Thus ended the first white settlement.

The next settlers were William Childers, Joseph Lindsey, John and Samuel Pringle, who deserted the Fort at the forks of the Ohio and found a hiding place near New Geneva. Considering the location unsafe they started out in search of something better. They finally landed about two and one-half miles east of Aurora on what we now call Rhine Creek, near the place where the little creek empties into Yough. Here the men engaged in hunting and fishing. This was in 1761. Samuel Pringle, the following year with his companions, followed a path which he discovered, which led him to the Looney Creek settlement. Childers and Lindsey soon found themselves in the clutches of the law, having been recognized as absconders from a garrison. The Pringle brothers made good their escape and were again on old retreat in this neighborhood. John Simpson from the East visited their camp one day and employed them in obtaining furs. Later other hunters came in from Maryland because of the abundance of game. It has been said that at least some of them camped on the Beachy farm near where the first meeting house stood. All the while the Pringle brothers were fearing arrest, thinking that some of the hunters were in the employ of the English government. They succeeded in persuading Simpson into going deeper into the wilderness. Their departure spelled the end of the second white settlement in Preston County.

In 1769 James Clark located near Clifton Mills, and John Judy, near Bruceton. Samuel Worrall and son, Samuel, made their home near Glade Farms in 1770. The same year James Walls settled on the east side of Cheat River in the northern part of the county. In 1772 Jacob and Martin Judy landed near Clifton Mills. In 1773 three Morgans, William, Hugh and Patrick, settled near Kingwood, west of the river, and Robert Butler and others on the east side. Thomas Chips was near Willey Post Office as early as 1776. The following year the Brains, Powells, and



The first mill west of the Appalachians.

Dillons entered the county. John Miller of the Shenandoah Valley was one of the first men to locate where Kingwood now stands. A few years before locating permanently, John and his father and brother were camping near Cheat River. One night, while the sons were sleeping, the father saw an Indian dart from one tree to another. He aroused the sons from their slumber, and the three crept to the river bank, and from there saw Indians around the campfire which they had just deserted. The red men soon left without making a search for anyone. The Millers returned to the valley, but the son, John, came back to Preston County.

Previous to 1781, Ashcraft had a hunting camp near Masontown. The Menears, Zinns, and Fields were located in our county at this time. A Quaker, Robert Forman, and John and Samuel Robinette settled in the northern part of the county in 1783. John Spurgin came to Morris Fort in 1785. The following year Patrick McGrew and John Willits were near Brandonville. In the summer of 1786, John Stough came here and said: "Eureka—I have found it"—a good location for a town.

The First Town

The pioneers, when they came here, entertained no fears of an Indian attack, and called the settlement Salem. This was the original name of Jerusalem, the meaning of which is peace or peaceful. After spending a number of years in this quiet place, the fathers of the German settlement thought the time had come to lay out a town. This was accordingly done, Leonard Deakins and Jonas Haguemyer being the surveyors. This work was accomplished on the 17th anniversary of Independence Day,

July 4th, 1793, during Washington's second administration. This was the first town in the present limits of Preston County. The baptismal name given was Mt. Carmel. From every view-point, it appears these men were the first looking toward the establishment of a new county, and at the same time they really expected Mt. Carmel would be the county seat. Think what they did! They laid out a Public Square in the center of which a site was marked for a Court House.

More than a third of a century passed by, during which time the town and the entire settlement increased in population and wealth. John Hoy and Francis Deakins laid out their lands at Mt. Carmel into lots which soon passed into other hands. The owners petitioned the General Assembly to establish Mt. Carmel by law. This was done January 28th, 1828 with the understanding that not more than twenty acres of land were to be included. The trustees, Jacob Shaffer, John A. Wotring, Henry Grimes, Jacob Startzman and Frederick Harsh were given power to make by-laws and ordinances for the welfare of Mt. Carmel, the third town established by law. Kingwood, January 23rd, 1811; Brandonville, January 17th, 1827 and Evansville, January 28th, 1833 were the first, second and fourth respectively. A post office was established at Mt. Carmel in 1880 in charge of Miss Florence Startzman's mother.

Religious Forces

The Methodists were in the county as early as 1798. A log meeting house was erected near Kingwood in 1815. In 1823 (perhaps 1822) the Rev. W. Hank was in the community. He came from Maryland. Among the early preachers were the Reverends J. H. Tacket, George McClaskey, and Mr. Athey, all of the Pittsburg Conference.

The Church of the Brethren organized a congregation south of Eglon in 1856 and built a church in 1866. Years later the denomination erected a building a short distance east of the Brookside resort.

The Lutherans, Methodists, and Church of the Brethren have buildings in the Aurora community. The Amish services are held in the homes of the members. Strangers coming here see at once a strong Christian sentiment and great interest in the work of the public schools. The high school is under Christian influence, and graduates have won honors in higher institutions of learning. The children in the past have enjoyed many blessings, and the leaders in the churches are cooperating with the teachers in the schools in raising the standards in religious and secular education.

Descendants of Pennsylvania Stock

Who has not heard of Plymouth Rock and Jamestown? But who made the United States? Here is the answer of the celebrated historian, Wood-

row Wilson, twice President of the United States, a Virginian by birth, Governor of New Jersey, and President of Princeton University: "However mortifying it may be to them or to us, America did not come out of the South, and it did not come out of New England. The characteristic part of America originated in the middle states of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, because there, from the first, was that mixture of populations, that mixture of racial stocks, that mixture of antecedents which is the singular and distinguishing mark of the United States."

Rev. William Arter Zundel, an author, declared, "Pennsylvania developed the first true type of Americanism. The great West followed the Pennsylvania type of civilization and government."

Bancroft, the historian, said, "The Germans composed a large part of the inhabitants who were all on the side of liberty."

At the eve of the American Revolution, the Scotch-Irish and Germans rivaled the English in numbers. The Scotch-Irish and the Scotch, who came directly from Scotland, composed one sixth of the entire American population at that time. And there were many Welsh, especially in Pennsylvania.

A number of artisans and carpenters in the first Jamestown colony were of German descent. Peter Minuit, the famous governor of New Netherlands, was a German. The first governor of New Sweden was a German. The leader of the popular uprising against the provincial administration of New York was a German. Among the earliest surveyors in America in the employ of the British government were Germans. A German gave our land the name—America.

The founding of Pennsylvania began with the great migration of Germans. William Penn was influenced very greatly by the peasant of the Rhine country and adjacent lands. His indebtedness to the Mennonites and others has too often been overlooked by historians.

Writers tell us the typical American is found in Kentucky. Some say he is in the Shenandoah Valley. The first settlers in Kentucky were Scotch-Irish, German, Welsh, English, and French Huguenots. A large number were Pennsylvanians who traveled on flat boats from Brownsville and Pittsburg. Nearly all the earliest Virginians who entered Kentucky came originally from Pennsylvania or were the descendants of Pennsylvanians. Many of the pioneers from the Carolinas and Tennessee who settled in Kentucky had been sojourning in the Shenandoah Valley after leaving Pennsylvania en route southward.

Germans of Pennsylvania were the first settlers in the Shenandoah Valley, and numerically they have always been in the lead. They founded the Massachusetts settlement in 1726, six years prior to the advent of Jost Heit, a German. Nearly every person living in the Aurora community is a lineal descendant of Pennsylvanians.

Ancestors of Many Aurorians

German immigration to the New World began in 1683. The Mennonites were the first, followed by the Amish, and the Dunkards. But the main stream of immigrants had another source. The Rhine country had been laid in waste by the wars with France, and the church regulations had caused restlessness. This prepared the people for a change where there would be more freedom both in church and in state.

Arrangements for immigration were made in 1704. In a short time there were hundreds, yes, thousands here. In 1717 Governor Keith of Pennsylvania, in addressing his council, said: "Great numbers of foreigners from Germany, strangers to our language and constitution, having lately been imported into the Province, daily dispersed themselves immediately after landing, without producing certificates from whence they came or what they are, and, as they seemed to have first landed in Britain, and afterwards to have left without any license from government, or as far as they know, so, in the same manner, they behave here, without making the least application to him or any of the magistrates. That, as this practice might be of very dangerous consequences since, by the same method, any number of foreigners, from any nation whatever, enemies as well as friends, might throw themselves upon us." See Col. Rec., III, pp29. 228.

Not long afterwards all males above the age of sixteen were obliged to repeat and subscribe their names, or make their mark, to the following declaration: "We subscribers, natives, and late inhabitants of the Palatinate upon the Rhine and places adjacent, having transported ourselves and families into the Province of Pennsylvania, a colony subject to the crown of Great Britain, in hopes and expectation of finding a retreat and peaceable settlement therein, do solemnly promise and engage, that we will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his present MAJESTY, KING GEORGE THE SECOND, and his successors, kings of Great Britain, and will be faithful to the proprietor of this Province; and that we will demean ourselves peaceably to all his said Majesty's subjects, and strictly observe and conform to the Laws of England and of this Province, to the utmost of our power and the best of our understanding."

An official record of immigrants was begun in 1727, and is found in Rupp's *Thirty Thousand Names*. Many who were regarded as Palatines were from Wurtemberg, Alsace, Hesse-Darmstadt, and other parts of Germany. Quite a number were Swiss sojourning in Germany, and a large number of Swiss ancestry, but born in the land of Luther.

The earliest settlers were the Mennonites, Amish, Dunkards and Seventh-Day Baptists. They were followed by the Reformed. The Lutherans were next, and after them the Moravians.

Thanks to Governor Keith, in compelling the Palatinates to register and promise to be good, he has preserved the names of 33,000 immigrants, the ancestors of U.S. senators, governors, members of the legislature, editors, authors, college professors, ministers of the gospel, financiers, and men and women who figure prominently in the history of our country. The following are extracts from official records:

Palatinates imported in the ship *Mary*, of London, John Gray, Master, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes.—69 males above 16; 122 women and children—in all 183. Among the passengers who arrived at Philadelphia, September 26, 1732 were Jacob Stempel and Nicolas Stempel. (Note the spelling. Stempel is correct. M. L. P.)

Adam Wilt and Michael Reinhard are familiar family names. The former came to America October 17, 1732; and the latter, August 27, 1733.

The *Brigantine* of Richmond and Elizabeth, Christopher Clymer, Master, from Rotterdam, last from Plymouth 137 passengers; 44 males above 16—34 females; 24 males under 16 and 34 females. Among the passengers were Abraham Wotring and Johann Jost Heck and two boys under 16, Johann Dan Heck and Hans Peter Wotring. They arrived at Philadelphia September 1733.

Johannes Slabach and Dewald Schlabach came September 29, 1733. The latter was under 16. Johan Peter Stembell crossed the Atlantic on the ship *Samuel*, Hugh Percy, Master, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes, August 30, 1734. After this date none of the names of Palatines are published in the colonial records. See Rupp's *Thirty Thousand Names*.

Johan Friederich Stembel reached Philadelphia October 25, 1738. He came over on the ship *Davy*, William Patton, Commander, from Amsterdam, last from Cowes—180 passengers.

Palatines imported in the bilander *Thistle*, George Houston, Commander, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes: Jacob Lantz, Michael Lantz, Hans Peter Lantz, Hans George Dietz, Johann Jacob Dietz, Uhlerich Dietz, Michael Dietz—three under 16—Hans Nicholas Lantz, Johann Lantz and Peter Dietz, October 28, 1738. Henrich Startzman was a passenger on the bilander *Vernon*, Thomas Ricks, Master, from Rotterdam, last from Leith, Scotland, August 1, 1746.

The names are given as found in the official records. A question mark appears after the name Abraham Wotring. While pastor of the St. Paul's congregation, the late "Uncle Ike" Wotring informed me that the Wotring's are of French ancestry. Originally the first letter in the name was O. The ending was also changed. This was brought about by coming in contact with the German people.

Queen Anne of England encouraged the emigration of Germans and other Continental Europeans, and at the same time did what she could

in keeping her people at home. These Germans, ancestors of Aurorians and others, were feared. "Whose numbers from Germany at this rate would soon produce a German colony here, and perhaps such a one as Britain once received from Saxony in the fifth century." See Watson's annals, 11, p. 255.

The ancestors of the Slabaughs of Union District came here in colonial times from Germany and were called Palatinates. The family lived in Switzerland during the Reformation of the 16th century. Persecution drove them into Germany and when they came to the New World, instead of speaking the Swiss dialect, they conversed in the Hessian dialect. Many Swiss families settled in Germany and Holland and later, after a sojourn in England, came to America.

Johannes Lantz was in New York in the winter of 1710 and the summer of 1711. He was a comrade of Conrad Weiser, who years later became a national figure. Lantz located in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

As early as 1712 the Yoders, ancestors of the Schrocks of Aurora, were permanently located in the Oley community, Lancaster County. Members of this family were pioneers in southwestern Pennsylvania and were some of the earliest settlers in Ohio. A Yoder was the first white man to use a flat boat on the Monongahela and the Ohio Rivers.

Among the early settlers at Conococheague settlement in Washington County, Maryland, were the Startzmans and Hausers. The defeat of General Braddock, July 9, 1755 caused a panic among the white settlers of western Maryland. In August, 1756 Colonel George Washington wrote: "The whole settlement of Conococheague has fled and there remains only two families from there to Fredericktown."

Genealogy of Preston County

There is but one Preston County in the United States. The General Assembly, January 19, 1818, carved a county out of the northeastern part of Monongalia County. This was the thirty-fifth county in the Old Dominion and named Preston in honor of a hero of the Revolutionary War, General James C. Preston, Virginia's honored governor at that time.

In the year of our nation's birth, 1776, the boundaries of "West Augusta" were clearly determined. This district was divided into three counties—Ohio, Yohogania and Monongalia. West Augusta extended from the western boundaries of Maryland and Pennsylvania to the Ohio River, comprising the entire northwestern Virginia and the part that later became Pennsylvania. The remainder of Augusta County beyond the Ohio River was given the name of The North West Territory, and the part west of the Big Sandy was called The South West Territory.

In 1782, after the famous Mason and Dixon line was established, Yohogania County was made a part of Fayette and other counties of



MARTIN LUTHER PETER

Reverend Peter, the author of this historical booklet, is pictured carrying one of his most valued possessions—a volume of MARTIN LUTHER'S WORKS. Published in Jena in 1555, a very rare volume.

[illegible]

June

Ellen

Theresa

George 1st 21st 1791

George 4th 1797 James Goff Maria

1st 16th 1794 Joseph 1st 1794

2nd 1794 2nd 1794

1st 27th 1792 1st 1792

1st 1794 2nd 1794

1st 22nd 1796 3rd 1796

1st 1797 4th 1797

1st 1798 1st 1798

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*Church attendance in early
Aurora days involved both
devotion and protection.*



the Keystone State, with the exception of a small western part which was added to Ohio County. Yohogania is now spoken of as the "Lost County."

The Virginia Colony, twenty-seven years after the founding of Jamestown, was divided into eight shires. From one of these shires, among other counties, Essex, King William, and King-Queen were formed. In 1720 Spottsylvania was erected from portions of these counties. Ten years later Spottsylvania was divided into two parishes—St. George and St. Marks. In 1734, St. Marks was taken from Spottsylvania and called Orange County. The Colonial Legislature, four years later, carved two counties out of Orange territory west of the Blue Ridge—Frederick and Augusta.

Post Offices

There was a post office in the German Settlement (near the Brookside Mill) as early as 1820 in charge of Adam Shaffer. According to the U.S. Post Office Guide of 1822, the German Settlement was 170 miles from Washington city and 275 miles from Richmond. Henry Grimes succeeded Adam Shaffer in 1827, and W. H. Grimes took charge of the office in 1841. The post office was moved to West Union, and I. L. Painter was the first postmaster. At the time his successor, D. M. Ridenour was serving, the name was changed to Aurora.

Public Offices

One of the justices composing the first court of quarterly sessions in Preston County was Frederick Harsh, Jr., John Fairfax, the oldest justice, who at one time had charge of the Mt. Vernon Estate, presiding. Colonel Fairfax is said to have been the first sheriff of the county, and Frederick Harsh, Jr., the second. Neither one served, but sold the term of two years to Joseph D. Suit. Teavolt Shaffer and the Harsh mentioned were the first justices of the peace within the present limits of Union District. Among the justices of the peace from 1818 to 1850 were John Stemple, William Wheeler, John D. Stemple, Adam Shaffer, William H. Grimes and John C. Wotring.

The entire southern part of the district was in Randolph County in 1818. Ten years later a part was annexed to Preston, and in 1838 the residue became a part of Preston. Union was organized into the Fourth Magisterial District in 1852. Up to 1863 the following served as justices: William H. Grimes, John A. Wotring, John D. Stemple, Philo Weills, William Wheeler and J. H. Shaffer.

The Fourth District was established as a township and named Union. This was a week after the Union victory at Gettysburg—one of the decisive battles of the war.

Translation of church record data shown on page 22



<i>Christened</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Witnesses</i>
	Margareta Aug. 21, 1793	Adam Schefer Catharina	Abraham Wutring Margareta
baptised by Rev. Jung	Elisabeta 8th 1790	David Stembel	Eva Reidenauer
by Mr. Schrader	Maria Anna March 7th 1891		Jacob Reidenauer Susana
by Stauch	Jacob October 16th 1792	Caterina	_____
	Susanna April 16 1794		George Reinhard Susanna
	Johannes January 17th 1796		Johannes Stembel
Dec. 25, 1791 Rev. Jung	Maria Margareda December 31st, 1791	Georg	1 Georg Reinhard Maria
March 29 1793 by Rev. Jung	Eva Elizabetha February 1st 1793	Reinhard	2 Margareta Weil
May 12 1795 by Stauch	Johan Georg Feb. 7th 1795	Susana	3 David Stembel Catarina
May 18 1797	Maria Margareta March 25th 1797		4 David Reidenauer Susana
by Rev. Jung	Jacob March 1790	Tomas Reinhard	Reinhard Efa
Stauch	Juliana July 9, 1795	Anna	Christian Weishar Margareta
	Tomas March 16th, 1798	Maria	Jacob Reidenauer Susana
By Stauch	Adam November 9th 1793	Mardin Stembel	Adam Schefer Catarina
	Daniel August 14th 1795	Margareta	Jacob Reindenauer Susanna

Translation of church record data shown on page 23



<i>Christened</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>Witnesses</i>
	Georg Reinhard Sept. 24, 1797	Johannes Waltz Margareta	Georg Reinhard Susana
	Georg October 7th 1797	Jamsgoff Marie	Johann Waltz Margareta
	Heinrich Octob. 16th 1794	Heinrich Weil Susana	Jacob Reidenauer Susana
	Elisabeta Novemb. 4th 1796		Parents
	Jacob Decemb. 29th 1792	Johannes	Jacob Reidenauer Susana
	Adam Sept. 20th 1794	Jost—Hed	Adam Schefer Catarina
	? hilib June 22nd, 1796	Marianna	Jacob Reidenauer
	Susana Dec. 1st 1797		Susana
October 19th 1798	Daniel Febr. 9th 1796	Christian Weishar	Daniel McClean Anna
	Jonadan August 10th 1798	Eva Margareta	Tomas Reinhard Anna Marie
August 11	Johan Jost July 17th 1799	Johan Jost—Hed Marsiana	Tomas Reinhard Anna Marie
	Elisabeth May 1st 1799	Heinrich Whithaar	Parents
Feb. 11 1772	Sarra October 4th 1801	Adam Hackert's wife	???
June 23 1795	Elisabetha October 4th, 1801	Adam Hackert Warra	Parents
Feb. 3 1797	Peter October 4th, 1801	Adam Hackert	Parents
July 3	Anna Marie Oct. 4th, 1801	Adam Hackert	Parents
	William Oct. 4th, 1801	Daniel McClean Anna	Peter ?? Anna Maria
	Anne Oct. 4th, 1801	Daniel McClean	Hackert

In 1864, Summers McCrum served as president of the school board; in 1865, J. C. Wotring; in 1867, J. H. Shaffer. Members of the board were: David Stemple and W. L. Fansler; S. B. Daniels and Elias Nine, 1865; Thomas Beatty and W. L. Fansler, 1867.

The name Union Township was changed to that of Union District in 1872. That year James H. Wilson and Jacob Stemple were justices; Michael Boyles and Lewis Brady, constables; W. H. Grimes, president of the school board; J. H. Wilson, secretary, and I. L. Painter and G. W. Deakins were members of the board.

Earliest Voting Places

An election poll was established by the General Assembly, January 17, 1827 at David Stemple's house in the German Settlement, known as Salem. On New Year's Day, 1829, the place of voting was changed from the Stemple home to the John A. Wotring home of Mt. Carmel. By act of the Assembly, passed on February 28, 1846, the election poll was removed from Mt. Carmel to the residence of William Talbert of West Union, now Aurora.

The Northwestern Turnpike

An act was passed by the General Assembly, March 19, 1831 providing the building of a turnpike from Winchester to the Ohio River to be known by the name of the Northwestern Turnpike. At the time it was expected that the road, the greatest state road in the United States, would pass through Kingwood, the county seat. Engineers soon discovered that the mountain was too steep for a road to cross to Kingwood at the necessary grade of five degrees. Kingwood's loss was Aurora's gain. This historic thoroughfare was built through the southern part of the county in 1833.

Taverns

The stone house built by Henry Grimes in 1827 was converted into a tavern. The three had charge of the same in the order given: George G. Hauser, Hiram Hanshaw and William H. Grimes. Later it became the residence of Christian Selders and is now the home of Clinton Wotring, whose wife is a granddaughter of Mr. Selders.

The Rising Sun Tavern was a stage stand and was one-half mile west of Aurora. Later it was the private residence of Major David Stemple.

M. Wilt and his son-in-law, J. H. Wotring, conducted a tavern where Cornelius Mason now lives. At the foot of Wolf Creek Mountain Frederick K. Ford conducted a tavern in 1839 for drovers. Caledonia was a stage stand opened in 1840 under the management of Charles Hooton, who was succeeded by Francis W. Deakins. These men were toll collectors at the Cheat River Bridge where Caledonia was located.

Stemple

Luther Johnson Stemple is a son of Major David Stemple, Jr., grandson of David Stemple, Sr., great-grandson of Godfrey Stemple. David Stemple, Sr., married E. Catherine Rinehart. Their children were Elizabeth, Jacob, John, Maria, Catherine, Susan, Charlotte and David. Susan Stemple married Jacob Ridenour. Jacob Stemple served in the War of 1812. He moved to Carroll County, Ohio and was one of the first members of the board of trustees of Capital University, Columbus, Ohio.

John Stemple, son of Godfrey, married Sarah Boyles and lived near Aurora. Their children were Margaret, Isaac, Susanna, Mary Ann, Elizabeth, David, Christian and Sarah. Martin, another son of Godfrey, married Margaret, a sister of Sarah, daughter of Charles Boyles, Sr. Their children were Adam, William, David, Martin and Sarah.

Dr. George R. Stemple, first cousin of Professor F. W. Stemple, is a son of John Henry Stemple, a grandson of David Stemple, a great-grandson of John Stemple and a great-great-grandson of Godfrey Stemple, one of the founders of the German settlement. A daughter of Godfrey Stemple married a Schley, a relative of W. S. Schley of the Spanish-American War.

Wotring

John A. Wotring, a son of Abraham Wotring and his wife, nee Mary Troxall, married Sarah, daughter of Jacob Ridenour and his wife, Susan Stemple.

Walter C. Spiggle, whose father John Spiggle, a millwright, came from the Valley of Virginia in 1872, is a great-grandson of Abraham Wotring. The Wotring family is well represented in the Aurora community and has always figured prominently in local affairs.

Harsh

Frederick Harsh had four sons—Frederick, Jacob, Andrew, and Daniel. This is a large family and reunions are held annually near Aurora. The meetings are very largely attended and good results follow these family gatherings. Nearly everybody in the Aurora community is related to the Stemples, Wotrings and Harshes. Oscar Wilt, cashier of the Empire National Bank, Clarksburg, is a grandson of Jacob Wilt who married Catherine Harsh, a descendant of Frederick Harsh, one of Aurora's founders. Jacob Wilt is a son of Michael Wilt who married Catherine Hay of Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Michael Wilt's other sons were Michael and Franklin.

Frederick Harsh married a Miss Core. The following are their children: Frederick married Sarah Bolyard; John married Sarah Wotring, second marriage—Barbour; Jacob married Sarah Stemple; Andrew; a

daughter married Elisha Hays; Frances married John Wotring; Eliza married Jacob Lantz. Two descendants of Frederick Harsh were prominent clergymen of the Lutheran Church in Ohio, both graduates of the college and theological seminary, Columbus, Ohio.

Wheeler

John Wheeler came here in 1800 from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He married Miss Catherine Gauer (Gour), a member of a pioneer family in America. John J. Wheeler lived on the Lawton farm between Aurora and Rowlesburg. William, a magistrate, went to Indiana. Two sons of John remained. David located at Reedsville, and Henry H. settled at Rowlesburg in 1851, where he was magistrate thirty-seven years.

Lipscomb

Thomas Lipscomb's parental ancestors came from England in the colonial days. His father was Elias B. Lipscomb and his mother was Mary Ellen, daughter of Criss Wiles; his grandfather, Filden Lipscomb, married a Miss Bond whose brother was the architect of the Cheat River Bridge over which the great Northwestern Turnpike passes; his great-grandfather, Ambrose, came to Preston County in 1808 and settled about a mile from Cheat River and three from the present Centennial Church on Stemple Ridge. Ambrose served in the American Revolution, and his grave has been marked by the D.A.R. Mrs. Thomas Lipscomb was Miss Etta, daughter of Elic Bolyard and grand-daughter of Indian Steve Bolyard of Reno District. The Bolyards are numerous throughout the county and many served in the wars.

Startzman

David Startzman came from Cumberland in 1819. Two years later he had a tannery on the farm now owned by Hugh Foreman. He married Miss Susanna, a sister of Major David Stemple, January, 1821. He died the following June. Their daughter, Elizabeth, married John W. Bishoff. The day David Startzman was buried, Jacob, his brother, came from Maryland to visit him. He met the funeral procession near the cemetery and asked who was dead and was told his brother David. Jacob bought the tannery in 1822. His wife was Elizabeth Foster, a member of a pioneer family in the Shenandoah Valley. Their son Isaac is the father of Miss Florence Startzman, a resident of old Mt. Carmel.

Grimes

Henry Grimes was a Virginian by birth who came here in the early 1820s. He conducted one of the first stores in the community, and brought goods to his place on horseback. He built the stone house now

known as the Brookside Inn in 1827. William H. Grimes, grandfather of Miss Florence Startzman, purchased the property and conducted the tavern and in the same building his daughter helped him in the post office.

Shuttlesworth

Captain William Shuttlesworth, son of Archibal Shuttlesworth, is a descendant of Godfrey Stemple, one of the founders of the Aurora community. The Shuttlesworths came to Preston County years ago. Phillip, born in 1819, married Charlotte Sapp. His cousin, Joshua married Rebecca Sapp.

Shaffer

Adam Shaffer married Catherine Elizabeth Wotring. They had a large family: Margaret married a Timmerman; Teavolt married Elizabeth Whetsell; Elizabeth married Henry Grimes; Susan married John Ride-nour; John married Hannah S. Beard; J. Adam married Catherine Beard; Jacob married Rosanna Isenhardt; Daniel married Elizabeth Isenhardt; Samuel; William, twin to Samuel, married Rebecca Fries. To this family belongs the honor of establishing the first Sunday School in Preston County.

Lantz

Henry Lantz whose wife was Eve Bishoff, came from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He settled on the farm now in possession of D. A. Dixon, a former resident of Greene County, Pennsylvania. There are many descendants of Henry Lantz and his wife. Their children are as follows: Jacob, Anna, John M., Catherine, Mary, Susanna, Elizabeth, Eve, J. Henry, and Lydia. Jacob married Eliza G. Harsh; John M. married Susannah Stemple, second wife, Hannah Hauser; Catherine married Samuel Nestor of Tucker County; Mary married Peter Fogelsong; Susanna married David Stemple; Elizabeth married Conrad Nine; Eve married Thomas Beatty; J. Henry married Eve S. Stemple and Lydia married James Beatty. The Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church and the Mt. Olivet Cemetery are on the old farm long in the possession of the Lantz family. The highway leading from Amboy to Rowlesburg past the old homestead is the Lantz Ridge Road. The Lantz family was in America at an early day, first in the New York colony, then in Pennsylvania and Maryland and afterwards in West Virginia.

Weills (Wiles)

William Wiles came from Hagerstown. He was the father of sixteen children, fourteen of whom went west. He had three sons who were ministers of the gospel. His son, Abraham left this community in 1828

with \$8.00 in his pocket and went to Canton, Ohio and was the first student to enter the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Before completing his theological training, the institution was moved to Columbus. He had no classmates. Before finishing his course, a number of students had enrolled. Abraham Wiles had the honor of being the first graduate of the first Lutheran institution of learning west of the Allegheny Mountains. He was one of the founders of the Pittsburg Synod. He met his death in a railroad accident at Washington, Pennsylvania, July 16, 1886. His youngest brother, Philo, the father of Mrs. Cornelius Mason, is buried in the cemetery at Centennial Church on Stemple Ridge. Philo Wiles was a great hunter, and it is said that one season he killed thirty-seven bears and one hundred twenty-six deer.

Boyles

The first Boyles in the Aurora community was Michael Boyles, a son of Gilbert, son of Charles, Sr., who married Eva Pitzer. Gilbert Boyles, Jr., married Joan Felton, and they resided for a while at Aurora. Michael Boyles and wife are buried in the Mt. Carmel cemetery.

McCrum

In business circles the McCrums rank first in the Aurora community. The McCrums are Scotch. Summers McCrum came to Union District (Aurora) in 1846. Five years later he and I. W. Stalnaker entered the business of merchandising, succeeded by Mr. McCrum's sons, Page and Alvin. The brothers, Page and Alvin, were succeeded by Page's two sons.

Summers McCrum took a very lively interest in the establishment of West Virginia. On Saturday, January 26th, he attended a county convention for the purpose of nominating two candidates to represent the county in the state convention. Mr. McCrum was a member of the Committee on Credentials, and W. H. Grimes was another member. Isaac Startzman was a member of the Committee of Basis of Representation. Similar meetings were held in other counties. The Hon. William G. Brown and James C. McGrew, Esq. were unanimously chosen as delegates to represent the county in the state convention. While this meeting was being held, nearly 150 people of the German settlement met and elected Charles Hooton, chairman, and George H. Shaffer, secretary. At this meeting the action of the Southern States was condemned, and the compromise as set forth in the Grittenden Resolutions was approved. This a matter of local interest. After three hearty cheers for the Union Forever, the meeting adjourned. Honorable Page McCrum and his younger son, Honorable H. B. McCrum, occupied places on important committees in the State Legislature.

Forman

The first Forman in Union District was Elmer Forman, who married Lydia Deets, and their children were George, Lucian, Anna and Nina.

Allen Forman had a wide acquaintance in the county. When he came here from Brandonville, he located on the farm once occupied by Elmer. Allen was the son of Richard and the grandson of Samuel who settled in the northeastern part of Preston County before Stough came to Aurora. Allen Forman served four succeeding terms as County Commissioner. After an intermission, he was elected and served ten years, and then he retired.

Teets

This is a colonial family of Pennsylvania. Thomas C. Teets, a school-teacher for over twenty years, of the firm of Teets and Bolyard, proprietors of the Aurora Garage, is a great-grandson of a Preston County pioneer who came to Brandonville about the time of the German settlement. Later he located in the Shenandoah Valley where Thomas' grandfather, Levi Teets, was born. Levi Teets moved to Hardy County where David, the father of Thomas was born. David came to Aurora with his parents nearly fifty years ago. Aurora is the home of David's brothers and sisters.

Beachy

Daniel Beachy, a minister of the Amish Church, came with his wife, nee Elizabeth Yoder, and three children from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, in the spring of 1853. He bought of Isaac Startzman a part of the "Rich Hill Tract" adjoining the village of Aurora. On this farm he reared his family of eleven children. Jacob, Miss Fanny, and Miss Leah still reside at the Beachy homestead. Daniel Beachy was associated with Peter Miller, a minister, who lived in Garrett County, Maryland. Other early families of this faith in Union District were Samuel Gnagy, John Slabaugh, Peter Schrock, Moses Miller, Joseph and Henry Miller, Daniel Schrock, C. J. Petersheim, C. A. Selders, and E. C. Yoder. Members of these families left and established homes in other states and the Dominion of Canada. Descendants of these highly honored families live in the community and are among our best citizens.

Wilson

The first Wilson who came here was Miss Juliana who married Israel L. Painter, the parents of Dr. Franklin Verzelius Newton Painter whose name is recorded in *Who's Who in America*. One of Dr. Painter's daughters is the wife of Dr. Hanson, president of Gettysburg College. The Wilsons and Painters are old families in the Shenandoah Valley, the former being of Scotch ancestry and the latter of German ancestry.

Fint

Daniel Luther Fint is the son of the late John Fint and his wife Mary, daughter of Daniel F. Wotring who married Rosana Core. Daniel F. Wotring was a son of John C. Wotring and his wife Fanny, nee Harsh. Daniel Luther Fint's wife, Fronia, nee Crow, is a granddaughter of Jacob Crow of Frostburg, Maryland.

Myers

David and Lloyd Myers married daughters of "Aunt Hannah Lantz." The daughters were grandchildren of Ezra Hauser. The Hausers came from Frederick, Maryland and were related to Barbara Fritchie who was a Hauser. The Myers, who came here from Pennsylvania have been identified with the community for many years. David and Lloyd, sons of Samuel Myers have always taken a lively interest in political affairs and occupied positions of trust.

Lawton

Charles Taylor Lawton came to this community in 1869. He is a descendant of a New England family. He married Almira Susannah Wheeler. Their children are Cora Annie, George Ellsworth, Albert Justin, Charles Ernest, Evelyn Cornelia, Raymond Wheeler and Nellie Virginia. Dr. J. Roy Arnett, for years a physician in this place, married Miss Cora Lawton. His children, Dwight and the Misses Merle and Leila, are prominent in church and social circles. Dwight, like his father, is quite active in school work. Miss Evelyn Cornelia Lawton is the wife of J. Webb Davis, a knight of the grip of Grafton, and well known to everybody in this community. Arnettsville, West Virginia was named in honor of the family.

Selders

The late Daniel Selders' great-great-great-grandfather, Jacob Hostetler, together with his two sons were captured by the Indians. Mrs. Hostetler and two children were killed. This was September 19, 1757. The next month, the news sent out from Reading, appeared in the English and German papers of Philadelphia. The boys returned home after an absence of seven years, the father preceeding them. The account of their thrilling experiences appears in the history of this Swiss family. Mr. Selder's wife was Elizabeth Schrock. Mr. Selders spent nearly his entire life in the "Brookside Inn," one of the best preserved and most historical landmarks on the great Northwestern Turnpike. Children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Selders live in the Aurora community.

The following is of interest: Jacob Hostetler married Anna Lorentz; John Hostetler married Catherine Hertzler; Annella (Anna) Hostetler

married Abraham Miller; Susan Miller married Peter Petersheim; Lydia Petersheim married Christian Selders; Daniel Selders married Elizabeth Schrock. Members of the ninth generation of the Hostetler family live in the Aurora community.

Trotter

Dr. Frank B. Trotter's father paid no attention to Horace Greeley's advice: "Go West, and grow up with the country." He went East. He and his wife came from Washington County, Ohio, the year Uncle Sam was celebrating his 100th birthday.

Dr. Trotter was connected with the Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, West Virginia, for seventeen years as Professor of Latin, Vice-President, and on two different times as Acting President. He is well known as a leader among educators. He was President of the West Virginia University under whose direction the institution had a wonderful growth, and he is now Instructor of Latin in the University. His brother, James Russell Trotter, who died July 5, 1925, was State Superintendent of Schools 1897-1901; practiced law in Buckhannon 1903-1908, and was Professor of Law at West Virginia University 1908-1925. His sister, Miss Jessie Trotter, is an instructor in Shepherd College, Shepherdstown, West Virginia. His elder sister married David Conrad Stemple, parents of Professors Rodney and Forrest W. Stemple.

The doctor's parental ancestors came from the Emerald Isle. His mother's grandparents were in eastern Maryland and northern Virginia about 1770 and were of German ancestry and settled in northern Ohio about 1800, where his mother was born. His grandfather and grandmother Trotter located near Marietta, Ohio, soon after the Mexican War.

Long

Mr. R. K. Long came from Greene County, Pennsylvania over thirty years ago. His ancestors, several of whom were in the war for American Independence, came to Greene County from eastern Pennsylvania, when it was thought they were in northwestern Virginia. They found the place the very frontier of civilization. Mr. Long is a descendant of the Keeners, one of the first families in southwestern Pennsylvania. Mr. Long married a sister of David A. Dixon. The father of D. A. Dixon and Mrs. Long came with the families from Pennsylvania. Father Dixon at the time of his death was one of the oldest men in Preston County.

A Few Added Comments

Items of interest relative to the early history of this community have been written, some of which have appeared in newspapers and in book form. Contradictory statements have been made. We are not infallible.

Jacob was a brother of David Ridenour. Jacob's children are Martin who married Mary Miller; John married Susan Shaffer; Sarah married John A. Wotring; Eve C. married H. Y. Hauser; Mary married Joseph Everly.

George Wagner, son of Jacob Wagner and his wife Miss Trozall, was born in the German settlement in 1791. He married Susan Bishoff and died in 1863. It has been said that three families came with John Stough and his wife from Maryland. They were Jacob Wagner and wife; John Deitrich and his wife, Magdalena Trozall. The name of the third family is doubtful.

The late Miss Christena Stemple stated a number of years before she died that the Wilt family built the first house in this community. If this is true, Mr. Wilt and his wife constituted the third family in the colony which came here with the Stoughs. But remember this: John Stough and wife, and another man and wife started alone for the "West." As already stated, his comrade was drowned on the way. We entertain the opinion that Wagner, Deitrich, and Wilt arrived here soon after the advent of Stough and just prior to Stemple, Wotring and others.

The Rineharts were here as early as 1788. Father Rinehart had a large family. His son, John Rinehart, David Ridenour, and perhaps others of the German settlement, and Martin Easterday, George Easterday, John Reider, and a Mr. Bowers of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, were charter members of the Good Hope Congregation at Bowling Green, Jefferson County, Ohio, the first Lutheran organization in the Buckeye State. The congregation had no pastor. Rinehart was authorized to write an appeal to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania (the first Lutheran Synod in America) which brought Lutheran ministers into Ohio. His letter was a noteworthy one for the reason that it was the first petition from Ohio and it brought John Stough as the herald of the cross.

Rinehart entered the ministry in 1812. In 1819 he crossed the state of Ohio and entered into Indiana on a missionary trip. He went as far northwest as where Fort Wayne is situated, making the journey on horseback. He traveled a long distance with an Indian who also was journeying on horseback. In speaking of this he said: "We had a hearty

conversation, however, he could not talk nor understand German nor I the Indian language. Still by signs, motions and laughs, we spent the time most jocosely." When he was eighty years old, he wrote a letter to the *Lutheran Standard* of Columbus, Ohio. As the Synod was in debt, he called upon the people to support the Lord's work. This letter is in the possession of the Historical Society, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. This is the first sentence: "Here are three dollars, one from myself, one from my wife, and one from both of us for some miser no matter where he may be, for there are plenty of them." Rinehart's letter did much good, for money came in from all directions and the debt was cancelled. "Good old John Rinehart," as he was known by many, was eighty-nine years old when he died. David Ridenour was eighty at the time of his death.



PART II

PIONEER HISTORY

OF

AURORA, PRESTON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

WRITTEN BY

THOMAS STARTZMAN IN THE 1890's

Thomas Startzman, son of Jacob Startzman and wife Elizabeth, was born July 19, 1841 and died at his home in Carmel in 1911. He married Frances Rodgers and to this union one child, William, was born.

THE WONDERFUL FLOW of immigration westward after the close of the Revolutionary War did not fail to leave its proportion on what now constitutes a part of Preston County. It was during that period and in the spring of 1788 that four German families left the vicinity of Hagerstown, Maryland to seek a home in the Mississippi Valley, and after traveling and many difficulties and thrilling adventures in crossing swollen streams, aided by a compass and partly following an old trail, they arrived on the evening of March 27th in that year and camped for the night at the extreme western end of the Green Glades, and on one of the farthest western branches of the Youghiogheny River, and near where the village of Carmel now stands. Their stopping place was at the foot of a small hill of a few acres in extent, and near by gushed from the hills a sparkling spring of water as pure as any that ever touched the lips of man. They rested for the night.

These people were all of German birth. They were John Stough, Jacob Wagner, Jacob Teatrick and the fourth family has always supposed to have been Michael Wilt. Each of these men had just been married and their brides accompanied them. Each of these families transported their goods and utensils in a cart, and each family had a cow. The weather was fine, and the day after they arrived was Good Friday.

They had brought with them the customs of the Fatherland, and of all holidays and movable festivals, none are so impressively observed as Good Friday, for it is said that even the ringing of the church bells and vocal and instrumental music in the churches are dispensed with on that day. It is not to be wondered at that these good people refrained from traveling on that day, and as the Eastertide was at hand, which is also very reverently observed by the Germans, they concluded to rest for a few days, an incident that led no doubt to the immediate settlement of that section. The spot where they encamped was a delightful place. A small glade extended in front of their camp, and was hemmed in on all sides by the primeval forest, and through this glade ran a purling stream. The season, even at this early date, was far advanced, and the spring was delightful; and, indeed, it has often been asserted by the forest settlers and their immediate descendants that the springs were much earlier and the autumns were much longer than they are now. It is said that some of the trees were giving evidence of leafing, and the alder bush and the hawthorn were in small leaf, whilst the May apple,

sweet anise, violets, and trailing arbutus were scattering their fragrance to the air. The feathered songsters were making the woods ring, and the drumming of the pheasant and the gobbling of the wild turkey could be heard on all the hillsides. During the rest they walked around and were so much pleased with the appearance of the country and their surroundings and the fertility of the soil, with its water power, its natural meadows, which they knew would greatly benefit them in supplying them with hay for their stock, that they resolved to stop for the season, at once.

The first thing they did was to tap some of the sugar maple trees so the ladies could boil sugar, and the men erected a log cabin. The glade in front of them was already green and offered excellent pasturage for their stock, so that it needed little attention. As soon as the cabin was completed, a piece of ground was cleared and the sunlight was let in to the virgin soil, and in due time a plot of vegetables was planted. The woods were full of game, sturdy pioneers soon broke the solitude of the forest with the shrill echo of the rifle, and no less inviting was the finny tribe of the streams, for all the creeks were alive with trout. The four families lived together the first summer, and in the meantime John Hoyer and Leonard Deakins, who had patented a large body of land, came to look at it and offered each of the four families forty acres, on the condition that they would occupy it ten years. This was to induce others to come. The offer was accepted by each family, and they proceeded to select sites. Stough selected where Lloyd L. Lantz now lives, and built his cabin between the spring and the present road. Wagner selected the land near his cabin about 150 yards west of Mr. S. Wotring Jr.'s present residence. Teatrick selected his land and built his cabin about 100 yards east of the Startzman Tannery, and Wilt built his cabin about 150 yards west of the present residence of David Stemple, Jr. He had, however, a falling out with Hoyer and left after one year and bought land of John Goff and settled where John Bowman now lives.

A biographical sketch of the life of John Stough is still preserved in the neighborhood, as he afterwards became a minister. He says, "The following year six families and one single man joined the colony and the woodsman's ax could be heard in all directions." As far as can be ascertained, these families were: George Stough, who settled where D. H. Wagner now lives but who remained for only a few years; August Christian Whitehair, who settled where Jacob Elsey now lives; David Stemple, who settled where the old tavern now stands a half mile west of Aurora; Jacob Ridenour, who settled where Daniel Beachy now lives; John Wotring, who settled where his great grandson, David Wotring, now lives; Adam Shaffer, who settled at the Greenleaf farm near Frush's mill; and the single man, Jost Heck, who settled where Samuel Wotring



now lives. Within the next few years came the progenitors of the several well known families—Thomas Rinehart, who settled at the east end of Aurora on what is now the property of Dr. J. H. Legge; Peter Heckart, who settled one half mile west of Eglon on what is now known as the John Lantz farm; George Knotestine, where Jacob Pifer now lives; Christian Nine, where his grandson David Nine lives; Henry Wiles where C. T. Lawton resides; Henry Bishop, on what is known as the Daniel's farm; Henry Lantz where David Dixon lives; John Wheeler, who settled farther out towards the river on the Deakins land; and William Weills, who settled near Eglon. All of those pioneers came from Washington County, Maryland, and others from adjoining counties followed. Among them were Frederick Harsh, who bought Thomas Rinehart's land, and Mr. Rinehart, who cleared the William Wheeler farm. About the same time came William Bohen who settled near Eglon. Christian Bishop settled on the Forman farm at Amboy, and Adam Bingham, where Mr. Eli Yoder now resides. David Stemple's father, Godfrey Stemple, had purchased a thousand acres of the land from Hoyer and Deakins, on which land his son David settled and his two other sons, Martin and John, came out and settled on the same tract—Martin where Lewis Stemple resides, and John, where his son David Stemple, Sr., is closing his useful life.

John Wotring was an aged man and his family were all grown and several of his sons were amongst the first to improve farms. Nicholas built and operated the grist mill, saw mill, and carding machine at Brookside; Daniel settled south of Aurora, where his son S. W. Wotring now lives; John improved the farm at the top of Cheat Mountain; Abraham was a tanner and had his tannery in Carmel. Mr. Wotring had two daughters; one of these was the wife of Adam Bingham and the other the wife of Adam Shaffer. Mrs. Shaffer often tells with pride that on the day of the battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777, whilst their grandfather was in the army, their grandmother Wotring and Aunt Bingham raked and set up buckwheat while their mother moulded bullets for the army. The moulds that she used on that occasion are in Wotring family, or still were a few years ago.

As soon as the first settlers erected cabins on their land, the first they had erected together was left for a shelter for others till they could locate, and was then used for a schoolhouse and a place of worship. These people were Lutherans, German Reformed, and Presbyterian, and their friends at Hagerstown sent them a sermon book. As John Stough had taught school in his younger days, he was selected to read the sermons and exhort, and lead at prayer meetings. He in his diary asserts that it was under these influences that he was called upon to preach. People came long distances to attend church and to hear him preach.

As the colony was increasing in population, and the people came from other sections to attend church and to visit, the need for a better place to worship was recognized, and accordingly, about the year 1796, the first cabin and schoolhouse was removed, and a log church and schoolhouse was erected on its site. Any minister who came, no difference by what name or creed, received a cordial welcome and invitation to preach to these honest-hearted people. It is probable that the first pioneers had but little idea when they erected their humble shelter that it would serve their descendants as a place to worship for the next fifty years. The building was destroyed by fire December 24, 1845.

I will here insert a few words in regard to Mr. Stough. It is a pity that we have but a short sketch of his life. Many were the thrilling adventures in his later life as he traveled through the western wilds, and he was one of the first ministers to sound the gospel trumpet west of the Alleghenies. He died in Crawford County, Ohio, in 1845.

The colony grew and prospered in spite of the removal of its leader, and from this band of pioneers and the noble women who espoused them have come forth a race of people, the like of which may be equaled, but never can be surpassed for strict integrity and honesty of purpose.

The first mill was erected by John Stough at the falls of Wolf Creek. It was a small mill, and the water was conveyed by a spout being placed under the falls to carry it to the wheel. Its capacity was only a couple of bushel per day, but it was built in 1788. The stones were afterwards used for a hand mill and are yet in this county.

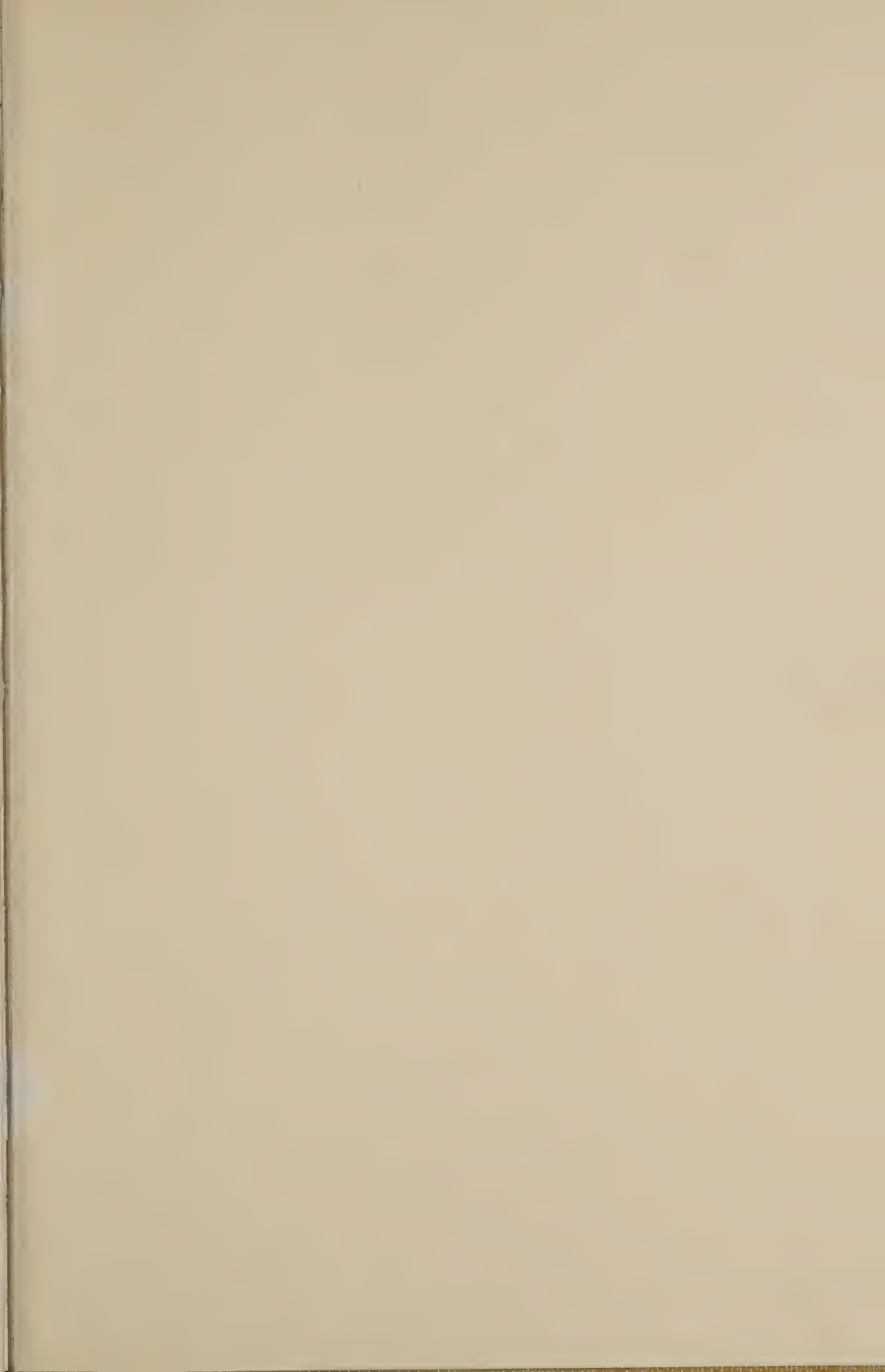
In 1796 John Goff had erected a small mill where the Northwestern Turnpike crosses the Maryland line and the Youghiogheny River. It was also a small mill, and the water was drawn from a small stream and ran into the river at that place. Trees of the mill race may yet be seen. It was used a dozen or more years, and about 1815 a better mill was erected on its site. The water was now drawn from the river, and as the country was level, an undershot wheel had to be used. This mill was used till the close of the year 1875, and was long known as the "Chisholm Mill."

About the year 1802, Nicholas Wotring began the erection of a mill that always bore his name, near where the Brookside summer resort now stands. A strong stone wall with a heavy bulkhead of stone and earth was erected across the creek. It formed a large dam from which the water was conveyed by a race to the mill, nearly one-fourth mile distant. The mill was a good one for its day, and was the only one where bolted flour could be obtained nearer than Bloomington, Maryland. The mill was used until 1842 when the dam sank (it stood on limestone land) and the mill had to be abandoned. The wall of the dam is yet standing. How a country so thinly settled could have collected

a force to haul and place in position such heavy stones as were used is a marvel to all who view it.

The colony had its craftsmen as well established settlements have. John Wotring was the first tanner. He was an old man and was succeeded by his son, Abraham. Peter Heckert was a millwright and builder. John Kalor was a stonemason. Jost Heck was a blacksmith. Christian Bishoff was a cooper. Adam Bingham was a wheelwright. As the young grew to manhood, they were sent away to learn trades. So it can be seen that the pioneers had the welfare of their descendants at heart.

The old pioneers have long been dead, and nothing but rough stones mark the graves of a few that can still be pointed out, but as a memorial, two little villages have sprung up within sight of most of their resting places. As an evidence of the advanced age in which we now live, the spire of church and dome of schoolhouse appear on the lands cleared out by their sinewy arms and husky hands, and to those places come some of their descendants to receive their early instruction and offer up their devotions, and but little thought is given by them that near by their venerable ancestors sleep in neglected and almost forgotten graves.



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